

Gold Star families through projects such as House in the Woods. This project continues to help both families and veterans cope with loss by providing a close support network and outdoor-related experiences, from fishing to hiking.

I greatly value public servants like Peter and I have a high appreciation for the essential and high-quality service he has ensured for Maine veterans during his time as director of the Bureau of Veterans' Services. I extend my sincerest congratulations and gratitude to Peter for all of his accomplishments and I wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement.●

#### CONGRATULATING SOUTHERN MAINE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I bring to the fore an organization that serves as a model for coordinated economic development and environmental responsibility. Later this month, the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, or SMPDC, will celebrate its 50th anniversary. This milestone is a testament not only to its longevity and breadth, but also to its ability to continually develop pertinent projects for southern Maine's economy. They are truly an inspiration for similar initiatives across the country and around the globe.

SMPDC is a Council of Governments enabled by State statute that serves the southern part of our great State in 39 communities. As this region forms the southern tip of Maine, it injects economic vitality to all corners of the State as the "Gateway to Maine." It boasts 300 miles of breathtaking coastline—with rocky points, quiet inlets, and sandy beaches. This coastline alone brings in thousands of tourists each year who wish to share the marvels of our distinct and special home. This region also extends westward toward the White Mountains, an area dotted with numerous lakes, fertile lands, dense forests, and crossed by the mighty Saco River. To help maintain this land for us and for future generations, the folks at SMPDC offer comprehensive planning and ordinance revision to communities to ensure they achieve the appropriate growth while preserving the land and shoreline that so characterizes the Maine way of life.

Being the Gateway to Maine, and given the recent Federal gridlock over properly funding the Highway Trust Fund, I would be remiss not to mention the commission's work to assist municipalities throughout the region in transportation project planning and management. They have rallied local leaders and first responders to address the emergencies on the roads and made the veins of our economy safer through their Traffic Incident Management Group—which in 2007 was given the Excellence in Regional Transportation Award by the National Association of Development. Furthermore, with I-95

and Amtrak pouring resources and revenue into the State, SMPDC has been essential to coordinating community action to ensure we make the most of these assets.

And even while focusing on the largest arteries of transportation in the area, the commission has not turned a blind eye to the scenic roads and healthy travel alternatives that encourage people to get outdoors and reaffirms access and economic prospects for Maine's vibrant eco-tourism industry. Teaming up with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, SMPDC has successfully implemented the York County Active Communities Network. This initiative explores the potential for improvements and funding opportunities for those looking to bike or walk safely and freely throughout their community. The group has also added further economic vitality to Maine through its work with the Pequawket Trail Scenic Byway, which winds its way through the White Mountains in western Maine and along the Saco River. This Corridor Management Plan floods the scenic towns along it with visitors and economic opportunity from downtown Standish to historic Fryeburg.

Perhaps what the commission is most widely recognized for is their success with the Brownfields Redevelopment Project, which is funded in part by the EPA's Brownfield and Land Revitalization Program. Brownfields are abandoned or underused industrial and commercial properties that have some threat of environmental contamination, whether it is real or perceived. Beginning in 2004, the Brownfield Redevelopment Project started funding ventures throughout southern Maine to rebuild old dams, mills, and other previously condemned facilities to help reintroduce many of Maine's beautiful, historic buildings to their communities. South Berwick now boasts a fantastic renovated library and Kennebunk even retrooled a gas station to create a community ice rink, while the mills in Sanford and Biddeford are teeming with hundreds of new businesses. At an event earlier in the year, the EPA cited SMPDC as one of the top 10 in the Nation for their wide ranging success with these projects. This work is truly exciting and a perfect demonstration of SMPDC's powerful impact on southern Maine.

As the Southern Maine Planning and Development Council ushers in their 50th anniversary on June 24, we should take time to reflect on the countless dedicated public servants who have worked with unwavering commitment to better their communities. I am deeply grateful for their countless accomplishments, and look forward to the many more inspiring and productive projects they undertake in the future.●

#### 2015 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the United States

women's national soccer team as it prepares for the first game in its pursuit of World Cup glory in Canada. As with the men's team last year, my home State is well represented on the women's team, with four players: Tobin Heath, Carli Lloyd, Heather O'Reilly, and Christie Rampone, who call New Jersey home.

These athletes and the 19 others selected by head coach Jill Ellis have worked tirelessly to hone their skills in order to become some of the best players in the world. Despite being drawn into the so-called "group of death," this U.S. team enters the tournament as one of the favorites, and I am confident that they will represent us well and make us all proud to be Americans.

While much of the world considers the U.S. to be a relative newcomer to the global soccer community on the men's side of the game, our women's team is unmatched in its esteem, having won two World Cup titles since the tournament began in 1991 and never finishing below third place. I hope that this U.S. team will build upon its rich history of success at the seventh Women's World Cup.

I believe that we will win.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:23 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2578. An act making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution:

H. Res. 299. A resolution relative to the death of Joseph Robinette "Beau" Biden, III.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2578. An act making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the